

THE
CREATION
The GROUND-WORK OF
REVELATION,
AND
REVELATION the LANGUAGE of NATURE.

OR,

A brief ATTEMPT to demonstrate,

That the HEBREW LANGUAGE is founded
upon *Natural Ideas*,

AND

That the HEBREW WRITINGS transfer them to
Spiritual Objects.

—Τὰ ὁράτα αὐτῷ ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου, τοῖς ποιήμασι
γινόμενα καθοράται.—

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THE
CRITICAL

THE GROUND WORK

REVEALATION

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A full account of the
That the HEBREW
LANGUAGE is found



That the Hebrew Language transfer them to
spiritual objects

—The Hebrew Language and its origin—
A full account of the

THE
CRITICAL

T H E C R E A T I O N

The GROUND-WORK of

R E V E L A T I O N,

A N D

REVELATION the LANGUAGE of NATURE.

THOUGH in a general, and perhaps in the most proper sense, whatever is within the compass of the human powers may be called natural to man, (in which respect Revelation itself composes the principal part of that system which the human mind is formed to comprehend); yet, as *nature*, when applied to man, is generally understood to signify the extent of the human powers, in a state as independent and uncultivated as that of the brute creation, guided by undisciplined instinct, I shall at present adhere to that definition.

THERE are then a great many things which mankind universally agrees in the practice, as well as in the acknowledgment of, which are not natural to man. Language, for example, cannot be called natural, though it be universal. Every one must be sensible of the difference there is between acquiring

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the knowledge and use of things by instruction, example or custom, and a natural instinct directing to certain things, without the intervention of education. Man has not that natural instinct, prompting him to the articulation of words and use of speech, which manifests itself in his appetites for meat and drink, and every other necessary support of animal life. As a confirmation of this, there is to be observed, in the dictates of nature, an unvariable uniformity, which cannot be traced in the most universal practices, which are originally derived from another fountain. Nothing can deviate more from the simplicity of Nature committed to herself, than the diversity of languages which have prevailed in the world. For though mankind in general seems to agree in the use of language, it looks as if it were of purpose to shew how obstinately they differ as to uniformity about it. Nor does this appear only in the distinguishing languages of different nations: But how fluctuating and mutable also is the state of every language in particular, constantly subjected to the vicissitudes of reformation, corruption, and obliteration; yea, always in danger of being vitiated by every individual who speaks it. No legislature has ever been able to settle the boundaries of any tongue, or to defend it from perpetual invasions. Mankind have not reeled and divided more in their religious opinions than in this.

THE faculty of speech is nevertheless the most noble talent which mankind can boast of; as it gives being unto, and includes in itself all the other powers of the mind. Language is the only way of communication and passport between the material animal

mal life, and spiritual rational powers in man. By it are conveyed the principles and nourishment of spiritual life, and upon it all the exercises of the spirit depend. In short, it is the link which connects the senses and the understanding, and is the only means of ascending from the material to the intellectual system.

EVERY one must be sensible, upon the smallest reflexion, what a mighty improvement the use of words makes upon the creation. Language, taken in its greatest latitude, is the whole universe subsisting in sound; so that every person can, at pleasure, call every being, form and action in nature, into an ideal existence, both to themselves and others. Which manner of exciting and rousing all the actions of the mind, without the material presence of these beings, which originally supply our ideas, renders mankind capable of a more enlarged and dignified use of this creation, than any other being in it enjoys. For, by this means, the creation is not only applied immediately to maintain and support the numerous lives it produces, but is made subservient to a degree of life and powers, which its most delicate machinery can have no direct or immediate effect upon.

THE knowledge of language considered in this view, becomes a very noble and entertaining science; for the necessary parts of speech, and manner of composing sentences in all languages, bear such an analogy to the construction and operations of nature, as connects the knowledge of the Grammarian and Naturalist; and shews upon what principles our spiritual powers are supported and act. So the

province of the tongue, is to be a standing rehearsal of the material system, for the behoof of the mind; a surprising blessing, when well understood and improved! But it is a great misfortune to mankind, that they mistake so frequently either in the use or the application of the greatest advantages they possess. It is universally allowed, that the mind of man is his better and nobler part by far; and yet, to our shame, it must be acknowledged, that that share of the human powers which is assigned to its province, is supported and cultivated, by the bulk of our kind, for no higher purpose, than the carrying on, in society, that commerce which is principally calculated for improving the delicacy, and increasing the luxury we are constantly pursuing, by the use of this creation; as it is subservient to our more ignoble part. But, surely, if there belongs a dignity to the mind, what by joint acknowledgment we all allow, we owe it inconceivably more of our regard, and more attention by far to its business, than we pay to it; never dreaming that we may possibly some time or other be made accountable for our neglect,

THE ingenious part of mankind have shown abundance of regard to several of the more perfect and refined languages, both antient and modern; but I do not know that any have applied themselves to consider that structure of languages in its necessary connexion with, and relation unto the things and operations of nature, which I have just hinted at. For what reason, and with what judgment, the learned have so universally agreed to neglect that language, as constituting a part of the

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Belles Lettres, which is the most compleat of any, and which is the most perfect example of adhering to nature in all its branches that can be imagined, I shall not take upon me to determine. The language I mean, is the *Hebrew*. But it is still more surprising, that the clergy, they who have been always esteemed the authorised guardians of revelation, should treat the language which is peculiar to revelation with so much indifference. For my part, I think it a shame to them that they should be called upon to that study by a layman; and much more so, that they continue still so unmoved, after so handsome and curious an address*. I am very unequal for enforcing such a call to them; therefore, I shall not be so arrogant, as to renew any application to them in particular: My intention is only, to point out some of the distinguishing excellencies of the *Hebrew* tongue, and to illustrate the singular structure of that language; that it may appear a study worthy, not of the clergy only, but of every person who has leisure, and is desirous of improving in the most essential pieces of knowledge and learning. If I rouse the attention of any, I will think myself very richly rewarded. I am confident, that whoever shall undertake the study, will soon be brought to acknowledge, that that language, and the writings transmitted to us in it, are stored with all the beauties and allurements, above sensuality, which, in other writings and languages, have attracted the study and attention of the curious and wise in polite literature.

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* The letter to a Bishop.

It is a general and very just observation, That a barbarous people never spoke an elegant language : That, on the contrary, as nations arrived at such an establishment in strength and opulence, as to cultivate the arts of peace at home, without danger of being interrupted by their neighbours, their languages were always then improved to their highest perfection. The more splendid that a people were, the more pure and refined was their language. If we consider the Jewish language in this light, we have just reason to conclude, it must be one of the most perfect that ever was spoke or wrote. Whatever other nations may boast, of their heroes and conquests giving peace to their country, by carrying their arms abroad, and giving laws to their enemies; yet we find it recorded with dread in the annals of the second empire in the world, that there had been mighty kings over Jerusalem, who had ruled over all countries beyond the river; and that toll, tribute and custom was paid unto them. No nation under heaven could ever rival the description left us of the Jewish happiness and splendor under the reign of one of these kings; if we consider the consummate wisdom and understanding of that monarch; the extent of his knowledge and learning; the grandeur of his court and attendance; the elegance and cost of his undertakings and public works; and the universal and unparalleled affluence, peace and happiness of his kingdom. If Solomon's court had that influence upon his subjects, which the manners of a court are always known to have among a people, the Israelites in these days must certainly have been the wisest and politest people that

that ever was; especially as the splendor of their monarch did not impoverish them, but, on the contrary, enriched them, to that degree, that silver was of no account in his days.

How absurd would it be, then, to suppose, that a barbarous or penurious and scanty language would be spoken in such a kingdom? On the contrary, can any resist concluding, that they must certainly then speak in the finest and most perfect style; especially as their prince was sovereign in the learned world also, and commenced author in a more extensive manner than ever man did besides himself; writing on all the productions of nature, both in the vegetable and animal world; besides his writing in divinity, which we have transmitted unto us? If the Hebrew language had no other testimony of its perfection save this one, it is sufficient to intitle it to the study of all who pretend any regard to learning.

THE Hebrew being the language which was spoke in that polite age, is a surprising testimony of its antient purity, fulness, and perfection; for it acquired no improvement or decoration from them. The most early writings we have transmitted unto us in that language, have as much of the nervous masculine strength, and, at the same time, of the nice and delicate turn, as ever was attained unto in the Solomonian age. What a miracle would it justly have been esteemed, if Romulus had spoke the Latin as elegantly as it was spoken in the Augustan age? Yet this is literally the case in regard of the Hebrew language.

As all other languages were gradual in their improvement, and refined apace, as the nations which spoke them grew polished and civilized; so they abode not long in that perfection which they were cultivated into, but, by the same degrees, they shrivelled back again into their original barbarity. In the Hebrew; there is not the smallest appearance of any such decay: the latest writers have the same purity of style as the earliest, and both of them as the politest ages in which that language was spoke; though some of the writers lived at the distance of near two thousand years from one another. In all which time it unvariably retained its primeval dignity, and was neither improved nor impaired as to its singular plainness, beauty, and strength. So remarkable is this unity in it, that there is no such thing to be met with, as the change of a word, through an old one falling into disuse, and a new one being introduced. All the words in it are unalterably preserved, and used, from first to last, where the same thing is designed to be expressed, without variation of circumstance. In other learned languages, we frequently meet with words used by different authors, nay, sometimes by the same author, in very different and unallied significations, as usage, no doubt, directed.

THE uncorruptedness and unity of this language, through all the ages in which it was spoke, either nationally or universally, is the more surprising; since we find that the Jews, though a very great and wise people, had the same biases and imperfections as the rest of mankind. In their state they underwent the same changes which conducted to grandeur and decay,

decay, and in every other respect were always deeply tainted with the manners of their neighbours.

In short, every article relating to the preservation of this most antient language, conspires to demonstrate, that it could not be the effect of human care and precaution, but of a superior divine superintendence. This appears so evident from every consideration, that any one may prove more certainly the divine legation of Moses from it in one page, than Mr. Warburton shall be able to do in four volumes, by asserting, That there is no express revelation of a future state in Moses's writings, even allowing him twenty volumes more for the proof of that assertion.

I hope, therefore, that when, upon a fair inquiry, it appears, that God interposed, by miracle, for the preservation of the Hebrew, there must be something very extraordinary in the genius and writings of that language, rendering them more worthy the study and attention of the wise, than any other science whatsoever can be. God created the tongue of man, and endued him with the power of speech; ought not he then, who gave utterance to man, to be the sovereign judge of language? and ought not we to receive and cultivate that, as in all respects the most worthy and compleat, which has such a distinguishing signature of his regard appended unto it? I take it for granted, that God is a skilful critic in language; and do think his imprimature to one, ought to have greater influence, than the accumulated judgment of the whole learned world. But it is profane to form any such comparisons.

I am so strongly prepossessed in favour of the candour and veracity of the sacred historians, as to be persuaded, that the speeches and conversations they recite were delivered in the very words they record them. Whatever liberties Thucidides, or Plutarch, Livy, or Salust, might use; yet the honesty of the scripture-historians, and the infallible certainty of their information, will admit of no such freedoms: and if so, the Hebrew language is very near coeval with time, and would appear perfect in the very first accounts we have of its being spoken. The ingenious Mr. Mandeville has shown what imperceptible progress man, left to himself, would make in language, and what a work of time it would be to bring it to any degree of perfection: but, if that wise man were to make his calculation over again, he would find the age of the world too short for man, committed to himself, to rear up a language.

UPON reflexion, we will find, that the prudence of the Almighty had proper objects before modelled for all the human senses and perceptions which should exercise his frame, as soon as it was composed. It appears also highly reasonable to conclude, that he had a language ready compiled for the exercise of man's tongue, and accurately adapted to express every perception his senses informed him of. The strict connexion I observed between language and the creation, makes it more than supposable, that the author of the one must be the author of the other also.

If we consider the office assigned to man, almost as soon as he existed, of giving names to all the creatures,

creatures, and the early conversation he maintained with his parent, the Author of all things, we must suppose him previously prepared for them; and that his Maker was his teacher. Can we suppose that God would act otherwise? Would the author of all that paternal affection, which is the nurse of our education and instruction, leave his first-born of this creation an orphan, as soon as he was born, and abandon the education of his child? From whence then should man have learned, that it was his duty to cultivate the minds of his children?

I shall add one observation more, relating to the present subject; and that is; As language is the substituting of proper sounds, for exciting the ideas we receive of things, their properties, actions, and connexions; the giving names unto the beasts and fowls, would have been a task Adam was very unequal for, without previous instruction. It is therefore remarkable, that he was not employed about the appellatives of the vegetable world, and the higher parts of the system: therefore he seems to have been previously acquainted with their natures, virtues and operations, by their Maker, (with their ultimate design), and the proper words for expressing them. Nor does this want countenance from the order of the narration of Adam's story, though short; seeing we are informed of a garden planned out for him with divine skill, and of his being placed in it, with proper instructions, before he was employed to give designations to the beasts of the earth, and fowls of the air.

As Adam and all his posterity were to be instructed in spiritual things, by the knowledge of natural things, and were to compare the one with the other; this was a mighty regular and gradual manner of advancing; first, to acquaint him with actions which were sensibly material, and then to exercise him by applying his knowledge to, and comparing it with similar virtues and actions; which, though material, were less sensibly so, and more allied to his own intellectual faculties. That this was the design of his being first stationed in the garden, is capable of demonstration. But there is no occasion for such a digression here; what I have said being sufficient for my present purpose.

If this language then appears worthy, by the regard God shewed to it, and by his defending it for so many thousands of years from the corruptions and decays which ought to have been the natural fate of it with other languages; how much more must it appear so, when it is considered as his composition? For it is evident, that language must either be natural to man, which, from what I have noticed above, is highly improbable; or else it must be a discovery made unto him by God. Man was endued with no implanted ideas of nature; therefore he could not have the expressions to denote those ideas before he received the impressions of the objects which were to excite them. Man had no use for words, till he had some to converse with; and the first we find him holding discourse with, is God himself. So that his Creator must either learn his language from Adam, or he must teach him one. It is also evident, that the Deity took
special

special care that his new creature should be very early stocked with all those ideas of things which were the primary subjects of speech. He did not leave him to traverse the creation at leisure, and spy out the novelties of nature, which he was to coin words for; but he placed him in a garden stocked with the diversities of the vegetable world, and he summoned all the animal world before him. So that man at first received his language in the most compendious manner. His ideas, and his words for them, were like the image and the reverse of a coin, both stamped together, and established inseparable companions. All this was executed by God in the Hebrew dialect. So that this must be the language of most natural purity, simplicity, and vigour; and most proper to express the impressions God would have us receive of his works and of himself. And is not he, who imbellished the creation with so rich and so amazing a variety, able to shew the same skill in producing a language? I must be of opinion, that there is as great a subordination between a human language and a divine, as there is between this solar system and an orrery, or the most perfect instrument man can invent to represent it; save in so far as other languages retain some parts of the dress, and of the original discovery, which is inseparable from them.

THERE is another signature of divine regard put upon this language, which renders both it and the writings in it worthy of our highest regard. It is the only language in which none but God is an author; he seems to have marked it out for his own use; no writings but his own are extant in the Hebrew.

brew. This very consideration affords the strongest presumption of the divine original of the language; and both these discover the true reasons why the Almighty interposed so miraculously for the preservation of it, while he had any thing to transmit to mankind, before his uniting himself unto our nature.

To undertake any encomium upon this language, after saying, that both it, and all the writings it contains, are the offspring of God, would be a piece of indecency; seeing every thing else that can be said, falls short of saying, God is its author.

THE persons whom God employs, as his penmen, were, many of them, men of considerable rank, of great education, and very extensive knowledge, and all of them men of genius and probity; so as their writings, though uninspired, might be supposed to make a first-rate figure in the world. But every one of them spoke, not his own, but the language of God. This astonishing thing, with all the evidence the writings contain of the certainty of it, has met with such a homely and undistinguished reception, even of such as profess to receive them with that stamp, that I come not too late to express my astonishment with regard to revelation in general; that he, whose word was sufficient to call matter out of nothing, and to reduce the inactive materials of the creation into so elegant a structure; whose word continues to support and direct the operations of the whole, has spoke unto mankind, who are of the dust, and has condescended to be an author amongst them. With what confusion shall our delicacy of taste, and boasted understandings

ings be covered, if the infinite perfections, displayed in the writings of him whose words are of such power, shall be found shuffled down, we know not how, from one generation to another, and through all of them universally treated with such supine neglect? while I know not what beauties in the writings of our fellow-creatures (many of which are replete with the grossest ignorance and impiety) have been, with profusion, fondly admired. If the writings which have fallen into such neglect, and are so sunk in their reputation among the learned, did not evidently display in them strokes of infinite capacity in the author, modesty would require, that I should make an apology, for taking upon me, so freely, to censure the almost universal taste of the learned, and of many whom I sincerely believe myself vastly inferior to, in every qualification, whether natural or acquired, when rightly applied. But when I consider, that the learned, in neglecting the scriptures, act so contrary to their own professed taste; seeing these writings are distinguished with all these marks of antiquity, beauty, and nature of subjects, which have enhanced the esteem of the learned, in writings very far inferior to them in these very respects; I become persuaded, that the cause of such neglect is so deeply rooted, as to deserve a worse name than simple inattention. Strange, that such a noble work, almost in every person's hands, should escape their attention so much!

THOUGH all we have possessed, or shall enjoy, from the first dawns of life, until the feeblest and last efforts to retain our expiring spirits, has been the constant and tender supply of the Father of the spirits

sins of all flesh ; yet have we been universally guilty of treating, with the most supreme indifference, a revelation which was presumed to come from him, and which pretended to give a faithful discovery, not only of the true nature and excellency of this system where now we are placed, but also of the fulness and perfections of the author himself, displayed more fully in that world which mankind are invited into, and to partake of the influences of, in a manner becoming the dignity of him, for whom are all things, and highly honourable and advantageous to men at the same time ; when I reflect upon this, I say, I hold it more than sufficient to convince us, that we are involved in all that guilt and corruption, from which this revelation teaches us how we may be saved.

Is that man alive or dead unto the things of God, who is not touched by the writings and language of him, whose word was sufficient to cause the mighty sun to shine, and daily to diffuse his treasures of light around the heavens, irradiating the shifting hemispheres of the revolving earth, and at whose command the liquid air flows round the same ? Shall the writings of men have their excellencies in our eyes, whose pens were dictated unto by their narrow and groveling capacities ; while his writings who hath meted out the heavens, and measured the circle of the earth by his understanding ; who knoweth the balancing of the clouds, and by whose knowledge the deeps are broken up, and the clouds drop down their dew, contain not a perfection of beauty in our eyes ? Shall man, in his style, be able to melt and flow, or to rise aloft like a God ; and shall not he who is God, have

have wisdom and utterance to make his doctrine to drop as the rain, and his speech to distil as the dew? or, has he not done so? Assuredly, if he who depressed the valleys, and bid the lofty mountains rise, speaks, and has rivals preferred unto him; he will one day shew the difference that is between the oratory of mortals, who mutter out of the dust, and the infinite elocution of him, who is higher than the sons of pride. As the Lord liveth, if the neglected scriptures are his, they are, and must be full of glorious majesty; and the human race is exceeding guilty concerning them.

A noble subject treated of by a masterly pen, gives justly great delight. But what name then can be high enough for the impressions which a subject treated of by God ought to create? Must our minds remain untouched by his speech, when all nature became obedient to the creating power of his word? When man essays to treat of the things of God, how soon is the strength of his attention wasted, and how does his expression languish, and fall short of the mark? But, when God speaks of himself, or his works, nothing of the subject can be untouched; nor can any of the dignity with which it ought to be apprehended, be lost, through default of the speaker. In apprehending divine discoveries, our minds must always be enlarging, to comprehend more and more of that fulness and energy which the oracles of the Most High contain. In short, the language of God, is the communicating unto the creature the knowledge and understanding of the Creator. Who then would chuse to trust their own narrow and short-sighted understandings, when they know of a way for attaining

the views and knowledge of him who is perfect in understanding? Or, who would neglect the improving of their own powers so much, as to despise these writings, whose very style gives such a latitude unto the understanding, and promises infinite enlargement to comprehend its discoveries? For as the things discovered are infinite in their nature, so the style in which they are delivered, is calculated to give unbounded scope unto the minds of those who are called to conceive them.

AMONG men, the elevated style mounts out of vulgar sight, and human learning is generally wrapt up in darkness, and delivered in a dialect which none but the learned can understand: Whereas, without degenerating from that nobleness which is only competent to God himself, he treats of things infinitely higher in their nature, with equal justness and wisdom, in a style as sublime as the subject; and withal so levelled unto the condition of mankind, that the lowest have access to be instructed by it. How great an additional entertainment must it be, to discover how the wisdom of God compasses an infinite manifestation of his own mind with so much plainness and ease.

THE subject of the scriptures comprehends a discovery of all things, material and spiritual. It contains the annals of the world, most of them prophetically recorded. The future fulfilment of prophetic pieces of history, foretelling the most considerable events which were to happen in time, stands as a confirmation of these transactions which happened before human records began. At the same time, we have an inspired history of a nation re-
corded

corded, in such a manner, as gave all fair opportunity of bringing the veracity of the historian to a trial. That nation, we are informed, was reared and supported by a train of miracles; which gives demonstration of all Nature's being obedient unto their Patron; and that he has the reins of government in his hand, as much when he does not, as when he inverts the course of nature. The many instances of human actions and natural ones concurring to produce events, which human knowledge could neither foresee nor traverse, illustrates how both may be superintended, without doing violence to either. The scriptures also give a short, but holy and clear account of the construction of this system, with numerous references to the same, scattered up and down; the whole philosophically just, agreeing with the justest observations on nature, and discovering many things in philosophy, which the deepest philosophers have not yet penetrated into.

Withal, we are every where informed, that this stately fabric is only a piece of scenery or painting, exhibiting the nature of a superior building, which the Deity condescends to inform us of; acquainting us fully with its glory; persuading us of its reality; and inculcating upon us, that, at the disclosing of that aera, so much renowned in the divine writings, this figurative plan of things is most solemnly to be dissolved; all nature is to disappear; and all generations and nations of men, and their Creator, are to see one another face to face: He is to vindicate and give an account of his works unto them; and they, on the other hand, are to have an opportunity of doing themselves all justice, and of putting in their claim

for a possession in that new world. Fancy, and the power of imagination, has a most unbounded extent; so that the principal happiness of life lies in the exercise of it. Revelation has given a discovery of things richer than ever fancy could suggest, or than the wishes of man could scheme; all which the mind may safely entertain, without the least fear of disappointment.

EVERY thing in the plan of revelation is made most palpably evident, and illustrated so by histories, events and things of this world, parallel to that spiritual dispensation, that we must be very inattentive and culpable, if we mistake or are ignorant. At the same time, the accounts are so diversified in a variety of styles, that the naturalist, the moralist, the casuist, the orator, the poet, &c. shall each find his attracting charms, and the most perfect examples and beauties of every particular kind. Further, I shall only mention, that, from revelation, we may also learn to decypher all the hieroglyphics, fables, mythology, &c. of the antients. But it is only imperfect and unconnected hints I can pretend to throw out of the perfection of the divine writings. I must leave the mind to expect infinitely more from them, than I can say of them. I shall therefore proceed to explain the structure of the Hebrew language.

HOWEVER base and degenerate man is now become, it must be confessed, in justice and honour to his Maker, that his frame is a most perfect and noble piece of workmanship; his powers are so admirably tempered together; and his station in the system of creation such as qualifies him, on the one hand, for being acquainted with all nature, its properties and operations:

rations; and, on the other, his fabric is so elevated, as to be fit for taking and comprehending those spiritual powers and perfections which gave nature its being, and so elegantly arranged and diversified its operations and their effects. We may further observe, with gratitude to the Omnipotent, for his profusion of goodness unto man, that he has not displayed all this beauty in himself and in his works, and brought them within the verge of our attention, solely to amuse our curiosity, to excite our admiration, and then to leave us wondering and languishing spectators of riches and glory we can never possess or enjoy. The Almighty is too kind to excite in his creatures any abortive wishes. On the contrary, he has endued ~~us~~ with a life which requires as much for its support, as our minds can receive. What a variety of beauty and curiosity is to be discovered among vegetables and animals? but how would the penetration of the discoverer be tantalized, if he might not feed on these beauties, when he was hungry? Upon the whole, when we take a survey of the composition of man, we may see that his powers are capable of infinite enlargement. I would retract again the word *infinite*, if all mankind had not set before them the character of a human person, whose faculties were able to exert themselves with such a boundless perfection, as to display all the infinite attributes of divinity, without any part of the glory or energy of these supreme powers being weakened, by expressing them in the nature, temper and actions of a man, whether appearing in the character of an agent, or of a sufferer,

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THOUGH man has organs of sensation bestowed upon him; yet he would be no better than dead, if they were not acted upon by external objects which do not depend upon his senses: So, though man has spiritual capacities, yet they can have no exercise either, unless they be acted upon by powers as independent of him.

THE medium by which the spiritual powers in man are roused, is his senses. His understanding is instructed, and explains itself by the perceptions his senses transmit; so that, with all the capacity he has, he can make no progress in matters higher than sense, unless he takes the creation for his lesson, and the omniscient Creator for his preceptor.

THAT we derive all our knowledge from the operations of matter, is evident; so that if we were to divest ourselves of the perceptions depending upon it, we would not leave ourselves masters of one conception we now have of spiritual affairs. It is from the influences of the sun, diffusing a vital principle through nature, that we owe our notions of life; from operations of force and impulse, we derive our conceptions of power; the variety, subtilty, intricacy and arrangement of material operations, are inseparably connected with our apprehensions of wisdom; the stability of the frame of nature, and the certainty of its effects, furnishes us with the apprehension of unchangeableness and truth: Light stands for knowledge and understanding; and darkness for ignorance.

It is both weak and wicked in man, to desert such a wise and kind instructor as he has, without the very elements of knowledge in his head, and then to set up for an independent discoverer. Put the philosopher

pher to the trial, who pretends to know so much of a Deity, without allowing him to discover himself, and explain his own works; and the wise man will soon be confounded in his own wisdom. Ask him, if the sun teaches him that God is all eye, all life, all power; what world then does this spiritual life display its power in? Is the figure of all-mighty perfections disseminating life through millions of beings; and does the great original shed his life nowhere, but only surveys the figure of himself, without bringing his own original powers more extensively into immediate exercise? Here all appears darkness; and if he is urged to reply, his ignorance is supplied with ridiculous conjecture. But, unless the philosopher can deduce from nature, where and how the spiritual powers of the Almighty are directly applied, upon whom they operate, what difficulties they have to encounter, what effects they produce, what influences they shed; they do nothing at all, and remain in the dark, as to any thing concerning the dispensations of a spiritual omnipotent being.

BUT if we submit, with humility, to be instructed by God, we shall find him making all the works of nature correspond with a spiritual administration of his efficacious powers unto a spiritual world; then we may know how it is that the heavens declare his glory; and what it is which the vital heat of the sun, from which nothing is hid, represents, namely, the law of the Lord, his statutes, commandments, &c. which enlighten the eyes, rejoice the heart, make the simple wise, &c.

WHEN we find God applying unto himself the great operations of nature; representing himself by all

all the relations established in it; assuming the properties and qualities of many, both of the vegetable and animal systems, as expressions of spiritual virtues in himself; ingrossing the finest works which the invention of man can execute upon matter; dispensing miraculous events in nature, in behalf of persons and nations, as a representation how, and in what manner he interests himself in behalf of the spirits of men; and modelling every thing in nature into a typical oeconomy: who can doubt, but that the Creator is carrying on, and supporting a spiritual oeconomy, every way answerable to the material one?

WHOEVER considers that these views run uniformly through the whole of revelation, must own, that there is a mysterious harmony between this world and an invisible one; and that the language of the Old Testament, is the key of this mystery: or else, they must allow, that the writers of the scriptures have been men of infinite invention, and of infallible acquaintance with the intention and plan of all who published before them, ere they could complete such an extensive and well-modelled fraud, which included a summary of all things, visible and invisible, past, present, and to come. But as such a supposition is impossible, we must conclude, that the perfection of revelation displays as infinite a capacity, as the creation itself.

THE Hebrew language, by the perfection of its composition, fully adapted to convey divine discoveries, and disclose the relations between material operations and the divine procedure in a superior analogous dispensation, appears framed by infinite skill, and fathers itself upon the author of both worlds.

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THE words in that language may be divided into two classes, namely, *primary* ones, and *derivatives*. From the connexion of these two divisions with one another, resembling the communication between the trunk or root of a tree and its branches, Grammarians have given the name of *roots* to the primary words from which the rest are derived.

As all the species of matter are known and distinguished by their actions and properties, so these *primary* words always express some natural action or property; so that such roots convey to us just ideas of all natural actions. The *derivatives* are formed, by converting these primary words into nouns, by the addition of some certain servile letters unto the primary word; by which means, these words become appellatives, denominating things. This relation between the appellative and the action or virtue expressed by the primary word, discovers some predominant quality in that thing, relative unto the idea which the root conveys. By this means, while a person is acquiring the language, he is, at the same time, discovering the true natures and virtues of things, and the connexion they have with, or the resemblance they have unto the primary actions or virtues in nature. Again, when spiritual things come to be expressed by these words, one discovers the proper similitude between natural things and spiritual ones; and the reason appears, why such natural things and actions are made symbolical. So that though all the words in this language are derived from natural ideas, yet their ultimate force and intention penetrates into invisible powers; because whatever natural power is expressed, that epithet applied to God, must express an

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action

action or virtue infinitely stronger or more noble in him. By this it will appear plain, how this language, besides giving distinguishing appellatives for things and actions, in common with other languages, at the same time, conveys some necessary and just instruction relative to their natures; their use in discovering the true characters and importance of spiritual things. How just all these discoveries must be, we may easily perceive; seeing the language claims an infallible author, and who was thoroughly acquainted with the powers of this world, and also of the world to come.

HERE we have decyphered the true natures of things and actions; the great ends for which they were established; the meaning of a material service in spiritual worship, and the reason of the concurrence of all antient nations with this way of worshipping; as also, the rise of their hieroglyphics, fables, &c.

As it renders the language of the greatest importance, and opens a new door for learning and discovery, to consider it in this light, I shall adduce some arguments in confirmation of it: if taken together, they are sufficient to establish the fact. I shall not be nice in arranging them distinctly according to their weight.

I. I shall begin with the most antient consideration I can adduce in favour of this fact. It is the tradition we have of what was originally transacted between the Almighty and the father of mankind. I observed above, that it was mighty probable that Adam had received previous knowledge, and words for expressing it, out of the vegetable creation, before

fore he could be accomplished for conceiving distinctly the predominant qualities of the living creatures, and for putting these conceptions into language. That, on the one hand, his appellations were to be expressive of the natures of the animals, is evident; else the Creator needed not have mustered them before the man, in order to his giving them names. If he was only to discover a volubility in composing syllables, and uttering different articulate sounds; it was only putting him upon exerting the most superficial of all talents; that of uttering words without knowledge. But it is intimated, that the man knew his own powers and station, and had penetrated into the particular qualities of every creature; for it is recorded, when he had discharged his employment, with the approbation and assent of the Creator, that he found not, among them all, talents that had any resemblance unto, or, at least, that bore any proportion to his own. "He found not among them all a help meet for him." The words include a great deal more than is expressed. I hope none will imagine these words meant only, that he saw no creature which walked erect, and whose bodily symmetry was proportioned to his own. The body is only a house, whose structure expresses the powers which organize it; it is these which constitute the nature of the man, and of the creatures, according to their different tribes.

On the other hand, it is certain, that before Adam's naming the creatures, he was placed in a garden dressed with divine elegance, and stored with every vegetable that was either agreeable to the taste or the eye, or rather which were good for being visible and

nourishing representations of the way of supporting spiritual life. This sense appears plain, by a reverse which these types had in the same garden: the tree, namely, in the middle, which man was laid under a prohibition of touching, as couching in it a direction, that he was not to turn from the instituted means of maintaining his spiritual life unto any other. Not that there was any natural malignity in that plant, or that the Creator ever prescribed any positive precepts without a reason assigned. We, to be sure, can have no quarrel or just ground of disputing his orders, if he should; but, however, we do not find any where in revelation, that he ever did injoin any such. It is also recorded, that the interdicted tree had a name given to it, which could not respect its natural virtues, simply considered; but its figurative use, and the instructions to be learned, with the danger arising from neglect or disobedience. All which shews how early the Deity began to transpose the ideas man received from his material marks, unto the instruction of his mind, and for typical uses. It shews likewise, that the names he impressed upon things, with the ideas conveyed of their natures, aspired at expressing proper conceptions or ideas of spiritual things.

HERE also we learn, why God, in his transactions with men, dealt in the figurative manner of instruction: Here Adam appears to be designed the father of knowledge also to his natural descendents; and discovers himself a prompt disciple, discharging the task with surprising discernment. Though it were only a fable, it is yet a very entertaining one, to consider the creation in this light; to find the names of both vegetables and animals characterising, not simply
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their own virtues, but referring, some way or other, unto the great actions of this system which produced them; and also to the spiritual powers of the great Author, with the spiritual effects they produce in the spiritual world. While we apprehend matters in this way, we also learn, that the Eastern style, which is said to consist in tropes and figures, and other bold kind of similitudes, both in language and sculpture, was not barely the effect of genius, but was a superstructure of their own upon original revelation, the fountain of all knowledge. How surprising is it then, that their manner in hieroglyphics and fables should still be admired and studied, while the uncorrupted fountain of all flows, though conspicuous, yet unregarded, as subterraneous streams!

I say not, that the intention of Adam, in naming the creatures, or the knowledge he acquired before his defection, comprehended all the future use that was to be made of the names given unto things. Therein again shines an omniscient penetration, by which the creation was adjusted to be a figure, not only to man in his integrity, without being tainted by evil, but also to exhibit the eternal and invisible powers of the Almighty, as a restorer unto man, manifested in the recovering him from being sunk into the sensual state, which abandons the spiritual use of the creation, unto the knowledge and enjoyment of himself as an inheritance, after he has finished a full delineation of all his powers and perfections, by exerting them particularly and distinctly for the recovery and defence of the helpless.

II. ALL Grammarians and Lexicographers agree in the genius of the language; they conspire

to convert all the primitives, or roots, as they call them, into verbs, and to trace a connexion between these actions or verbs and the derivative nouns, &c. Though they have been very unsuccessful in the attempt, being misled by a set of false rules in grammar, which are contrary to the genius of the Hebrew, and can never be made to correspond with the plan of the language, which they all confess, and which discovers itself at first sight to a very beginner.

III. THAT the conveying of proper ideas of things, couched in the proper names which design them, is a standing rule in this language, is confirmed by the ordinary practice of the people who spoke it. They being acquainted with the powers of the language, give no proper names to persons which have not a literal signification; which may be translated into any other tongue, distinct from the use it is applied to as an appellative. That such names were ordinarily imposed with a regard to the signification of these words, denoting something about the person, or recording some remarkable circumstance relating to their birth, &c. is plain from the numerous instances we have in the divine records of names given, importing the causes assigned for giving such names. I need only refer the reader to the Patriarchal history, which abounds with such examples. It was the happiness of that language, that it admitted of compounding of names and things, events, &c. in such a manner, that every person, along with their name, received the impression, and were enjoined the remembrance of some event or circumstance relating to themselves, the time or manner of their birth, &c. which might excite in them a suitable devotion

votion and regard unto the Almighty, or affiance upon him, with reference unto what their name recorded. Such a disposition is shown throughout the Old Testament, to impress remarkable events of divine interposition in behalf of persons, that it was not at all uncommon, when any extraordinary event happened to them, to assume a new name expressive of the fact. This was certainly learned from the structure of the Hebrew tongue, wisely calculated to ingross knowledge and devotion into all the words they who spoke it had occasion to utter.

IV. It is a further confirmation of the genius of the language, and of the extensive application of the natural ideas expressed by it unto spiritual things, to observe, that a divine Prescience frequently so superintended the application of proper names, as they very often became prophetic indexes of future events relating to the persons who bore the names. Nay more, the scheme of revelation, always keeping spiritual things principally in its view, very ordinarily introduces proper names, without intending the person who bore that name originally, but speaking of some spiritual thing or person, which the name in its signification characterises: so that the meaning and design of many passages, where proper names are used, shall be quite obscured, if we do not regard the true signification of the name, more than the private person who is known in the history by it. As these facts contain a great deal of evidence in them, I hope it will be entertaining, as well as instructing, to give some examples illustrating and confirming them.

SHeLoMaH

SHeLoMaH (or *Solomon*, as the LXX. and the translators pronounce the word) is a name, signifying that kind of peace which gives a relaxation from preceeding troubles, and becomes a retribution for the toils and distresses of war, &c. His pious and royal father David, long before the birth of this son, was advised of God, that he was to beget a son who was to succeed him to the crown, and who was to have this name imposed on him, as a badge of his future character, both in temper and government. When we consider that this person was a prodigy for wisdom and glory, and how justice and peace flourished in his day; when we recollect also what an establishment this unbounded peace had upon the heroic achievements of his victorious predecessor and parent, so renowned for his irresistible conquest of the universal opposition he had to conflict with, there is no disputing, but that his name disclosed a prophetic view of his person and government.

BUT, if it should be judged chimerical to establish any connexion between Solomon's name and the majesty and tranquillity of his future reign over so mighty an empire; to confirm it, I shall only refer the reader to *Psalms lxxii.*; which, though written in all probability before that Solomon entered upon his government, contains an elegant description of higher things than mortal happiness can claim; and, at the same time, which Solomon's reign was the most perfect example of, that the state of men in this world ever exhibited; and none, who allows common justice to the scriptures, will deny, that the divine poet establishes a connexion between the name of the person, unto whom the hymn is inscribed, and
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the lofty panegyric it contains upon the durable satiety of peace, happiness and glory to be enjoyed under his reign.

JeHODaH (or, in the English translation, &c. *Judah*) was the name of Jacob's fourth son by Leah. The name is a compound of *Jehovah*, a name of the Deity, and *JaDaH*, which signifies *to praise* or *confess*. The mother stamped the impression of her gratitude, and the disposition of her heart, upon the occasion of her son's birth, on the name of the child.—“Now will I praise Jehovah,” says she; “therefore she called his name JeHODaH.” Though the imposing of this name was an expression of Leah's devotion, yet the name itself promises, that either Judah himself, or one whom he represented, and who was to descend of him, should exhibit the character, and inherit the dignity and homage couched in the signification of the name. Therefore the person finally worthy to bear that name, and whose character the name describes, must be one who was a confessor, or a praiser and glorifier of Jehovah, by personally exhibiting, in his life, as a man, the full strength and beauty of the divine essential powers, which the name Jehovah signifies: and, further, he must be one, whom others confess and praise as Jehovah, acknowledging the divinity discovering itself in his actions, and applying unto him, with dependence and divine adoration. Now, though the right of primogeniture and royal diadem were transferred into that family, and though, by the blessing of God, the tribe was distinguished by natural strength and splendor beyond their brethren; yet the name, in the full latitude of its

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meaning, can characterise neither the tribe, nor the father of that tribe. And I shall shew, that the blessings wherewith Judah was blessed, first personally, and then *en famille*, can be applicable in neither respects; but, at the same time, they are a very distinct paraphrase on the name, and give a prospect of a divine person, whom they characterise.

THE venerable progenitor of that goodly nation, addresses his son Judah thus. "JeHODaH, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise," (or confess, being the word of which his name is compounded); and, by praising him, they must praise Jehovah, else the blessing and the name do not correspond, and the praise is not of that kind which the name challenges. But the prophetic Jacob proceeds:—"Thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down unto thee." They were to confess the divine powers in him, demonstrated by his conquering their enemies, and giving deliverance.—"JeHODaH is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up; (—Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive.—). He stooped down, he couched as a lion; (—what is it, but that he first descended, Eph. iv.—); and as an old lion; who shall raise him up?" Here the divine power confessed in him, is described in the character of a lion, the image of the most irresistible power; which image also represented a character quite alien to his being, as to his power, of human descent;—"The face of a man, and the face of a lion on the right side,—Ezek. i. 10." His resurrection is described as a victory over death;—"From the prey, my son,

“son, thou art gone up—:” and as a revival unto all power and glory;—“Judah is a lion’s whelp;” expressing his youth and childhood, in respect of his being the first-born from the dead.—So in another place, in regard of his resurrection, or being born from the dead, he is called a child;—“Thy “holy child Jesus,”—His humbling himself is described, as the effect of the confidence he had in divine strength;—“He couched as a lion.” The power it required to sustain him under, and recover him from such a depression, is emphatically insinuated in a question, which put human power to a stand, and implies the necessity of interposing superior strength;—“Who shall raise him up?”—“The sceptre shall not depart from Je-“HODaH, nor a lawgiver (the power of lawgiving) “from between his feet, until Shiloh (the peaceable “time) come.” As the Apostle says, “When he “shall have conquered all his enemies, and put “down all other power, except that of the Most “High (then, when there shall be restored endless “peace) he shall deliver up the kingdom to his Fa-“ther,” solemnly and publicly appearing JeHODaH; confessing Jehovah, by presenting that kingdom, and these subjects he has gained, by a dispensation of all the divine powers and perfections in his human nature.

I shall compare a New Testament prophet’s description of this person, with Judah’s blessing. “Behold “the lion of the tribe of Judah—hath prevailed.”—*Judah is a lion’s whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up.*—“Thou art worthy to take the book, “and to open the seals thereof, *for thou was slain.*”

—*He stooped down; he couched as a lion.*—“And
 “hast redeemed us unto God, by thy blood, out of
 “every kindred, and tongue, and people, and na-
 “tion.”——*Unto him shall the gathering of the
 people be.*

MOSES, in his blessing the tribe of Judah, adheres closely unto the signification of his name; but throws the character into another light. Jacob describes him as a person possessed of irresistible strength, and, by his brethren, confessed Jehovah on that account. Moses, by converting his blessing into a prayer, describes the person himself, as a confessor of Jehovah, and as depending upon divine power, and not human, for his aid; —“Hear
 “Jehovah the voice of JeHODaH,” (the confessor of Jehovah, and of his power), “and bring him un-
 “to his people.” (In the former his people were gathered unto him.)—“Let his hands be sufficient
 “for him, and be thou an helper unto him from
 “his enemies.—I have glorified thee on earth; —
 “glorify thou me with thine own self.”——

In this illustration, I have shunned varying from the translation, as much as possible: as it stands, I hope, there appears an evident allusion to the composition of the name; in the blessings pronounced upon that person whom JeHODaH characterises in the Old Testament; and also, that what is said of the person blessed, corresponds with the character of that triumphant conqueror, the New Testament hero; who is, what the ancients properly described an hero to be, one whose genealogy was divine and human at the same time; however vilely they corrupted
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that divine truth with their profane and numerous fables.

THE names of Jacob's twelve sons; their particular blessings adapted to these names; the precious stones, according to the different reflexions of the light from them, which corresponded unto these twelve names on the Pontif's breast-plate, display a very spacious field for discovery; seeing they were all characters and figures of the divine perfections and the glory of a person, who ingrossed, in himself, all the independent attributes of divinity, and who, as the light of the world, arranged and exhibited each of them unto mankind, in that point of view, which conveyed the noblest and most amiable sense of the divine glory mingling with humanity, collected in a man, and diversifying itself again through him, according to the powers, passions, affections and exercises of a rational creature. No sense is more refined, or gives higher delight, than that which the light immediately affects, by its surprising power of exhibiting colours. On this account, the rainbow, the mixture of the finest colours in the richest stuffs upon the high priest's garments, and vail, which presented itself on the front of the holiest of all, were so many visible ensigns, hung out, of the power of a person, who was thus to display and command the influences and effects of the Deity's light and glory. But the hint I have given in explaining one of these names, is an index for decyphering the others; and shews how much regard the divine writings show unto the signification of appellatives, and how high they carry their sense.

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V. **THOUGH** it cannot be expected, that the scripture should paraphrase the signification of every Hebrew word so distinctly, as, by the preceeding examples, it appears to do some; yet there are few words which convey distinguishing ideas of these things they are appropriated currently to denominate, but what have parallel passages giving the same view of such things in a descriptive manner, though such explanatory passages make no use of the word whose idea they describe.

THERE are many very beautiful and just similitudes of spiritual things to be found in the sacred writings. No poetry could ever rival them for elegance and boldness, nor for sententious brevity, for most part. But another peculiar qualification of the inspired figures and similitudes, is, that they are accurately just, and free of all hyperbolical licence. The subject of revelation, and the omniscience of the Author, gives it this commanding advantage over all allusions or illustrations ministered by material things and actions. The figures adduced can never emulate, in dignity and perfection, the spiritual things they describe; though, as to justness, they answer, as the powers of the body do to the faculties of the mind; the former being always faithful and obedient ministers, expressing, to the life, the intentions of the latter. The partial knowledge and capacities of human authors, and the nature of the subjects which the finest of their performances are writ upon, must necessarily infer a variety of imperfections in composition, sentiment, and style; some of which have very unjustly been reduced to rules of writing:
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but divine knowledge and skill requires no such hyperbolic and poetical licence.

WE have, in one of the Prophets, a very noble and elegant comparison run between the efficacy of the divine doctrine, and some of the most beautiful and beneficial operations in nature, to this purpose.

“ For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth, and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper whitherto I sent it.”—In other passages, the word of the Omnipotent is compared to arrows, a two-edged sword, yea, to the light, for its energy, keenness, and penetrating virtue. Nothing can be more just and noble than these figures; they convey the most lively ideas of omnipotence, and divine virtue, exerting itself as powerfully by the words which proceed out of his mouth, and producing real and irresistible effects upon the mind and understanding, as ever the same power discovered itself in the most noble and efficacious operations of nature.

THERE are still further beauties, of the greatest justness, to be discovered in these descriptions. They expressly present the mind with a moving penetrating power in these things unto which the word of God is compared; and, at the same time, they necessarily imply that power or impetus by which these are moved and acquire their efficacy.

ALL

All these ideas and similitudes we find ingrossed in one Hebrew word, which is translated *the law*. The primitive from which that word is formed, signifies *to throw* or *project*; consequently it always implies and points at the moving power, according to the various motions or projectiles it is applied to. That same word is applied to the motion of arrows, and lends a name to the rain: then it throws as it were the idea into a spiritual mould, and signifies *teaching*; as it is effected by throwing or pouring some efficacious powerful thing into the mind or understanding. And thence it signifies *the law*. That thing, these divine words, which, actuated by divine power, penetrate into the heart, separates between the evil and the good; which searches into the recesses of the mind, and is, to speak in the language of Naturalists, the vehicle by which the divine power carries on all manner of spiritual vegetation, and produces fruit in the heart. These ideas, which the word translated *law* conveys, are every where supported by divine use of the same similitudes, when speaking of the influence of the law upon the heart.—Hence these phrases, of bringing forth fruit unto God;—the fruits of the spirit;—the fruits of righteousness.—And, *Psal. i.* the perfection of the divine attributes, discovered by the inviolable attachment of a man to the law, and its influence upon him, is thus described: “ But his
 “ delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he
 “ meditates. He shall be like a tree planted by the
 “ rivers of water, which yields his fruit in his season;
 “ and his leaf fadeth not.” He is like an ever-green, yielding fruit every month of the year. As, in another place;—“ And on either side of the river, the
 “ tree

"tree of life, which bare twelve fruits, and yielded
"her fruits every month."

HERE I must observe the wisdom of the divine economy in the use of this language. While the spiritual things relating to God and man were exhibited by visible and material objects, and a bodily service in them, the prudence of God was careful, that all should be expressed in a language, which not only gave true views of nature, but which, in the full extent of the signification of the words, had an undeniable reference unto the spiritual things intended. While the typical service presented only material things, every word relating to these terminated their ideas in spiritual conceptions. Thus, while the Jewish dispensation, in regard of the external form, is called a *dead letter*, as these material institutions contained in their nature no spiritual quickening virtue, the words which denominate them, signified things which had spirit and life in them; as appears in the signification of the word THORAH, translated *law*. But, when the New Testament came, which is a quickening spirit, and when spiritual things came to be plainly spoken of, without the interposition of a material dispensation or bodily service, as a medium; that language was no longer appropriated to the use of revelation, but "every one heard in his own tongue the
"wonderful things of God." The reason is plain; because then the things came to be fully expressed and declared, which were before couched in material types, and involved in the signification of words. Therefore none can fully see the corresponding beauties of the Old and New Testament revelation, unless they understand, or have fully explained to them, the

meaning of the language in which the former was delivered.

VI. This brings me to another proof of the nature of the Hebrew language; which is, that the Old Testament dispensation carried evidently in its bosom a similar importance to that of the language; the whole design of it being to exhibit the natures and virtues of material things, and their operations as they were expressive of analogous spiritual perfections in the Deity, and acknowledgments of the manner in which these divine powers had been, and were further to be unfolded, for the benefit of mankind. This is so much the character and design of the Hebrew tongue, that the Old Testament dispensation and it seem to be so adjusted to one another, as to be connected inseparable companions and branches of the same oecconomy; both constituting but one compleat dispensation, so that the one would be lame without the other. The language was the soul and construction of the Old Testament symbolical state.

THE whole creation was epitomized in the Mosaic system. Every thing that was most perfect in nature or art had its place in that finished composition of earthly glory, which was then subjected unto the service of God. But, if the whole was not intended as an acknowledgment, that the supreme ruling powers of this universe were the ministers and creatures of an infinite being; and if the whole did not, at the same time, give testimony unto the inexhaustible perfection of these spiritual powers in the divinity, to be more directly and immediately exerted for the behoof of men, it was the basest design that ever was set on foot, and was calculated to produce the most terrible consequences

quences which the promoting ignorance and sensuality could involve human creatures in. These proved most certainly the termination of that dispensation with regard to the Jewish nation. And the question remains, whether these consequences are to be charged to the account of perfect wisdom and love, or to the baseness and depravity of mankind, turning the greatest blessing into impiety and wantonness?

SOME, in the depth of their wisdom, have, in apology for God, advanced, that the Jewish institutions were principally designed to humour that childish nation, because they were fond of such toys, and were obstinately attached to the like fooleries that took place in other nations. Good God! Didst thou bestow rational powers on man, and yet must thy infinite wisdom be compelled to abandon the improvement of these noble faculties, so rigorously to impose the grossest fallacies upon his understanding, for a religious service unto thyself; which services implied a contradiction of thine own nature, merely out of complaisance to our sensual notions? Can the most licentious allow themselves to imagine, that the Most High, in instituting a worship unto himself amongst his chosen people, would comply so much with the ignorance and humours of the times, as to establish among them a religious oeconomy, which exhibited notions of God the most ignorant are guilty for entertaining? This is the boldest piece of impiety that man can be guilty of, to vindicate our own corruption and abuse of the divine law, by bringing the most criminal charge against the Law-giver.—“The woman that thou gavest me, she gave me, and I did eat.”—The original dispensations

sations of revelation, which should have conveyed unto mankind the purest apprehensions of the eternal power and perfections of an invisible Creator, has necessarily seduced them into the grossest notions of the Deity's being like corruptible man, four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

BUT, if worshipping a spiritual being, and the acknowledgment of his immaterial powers and perfections, by a bodily service, in material institutions, was appointed for no other purpose, than to make the latter proper figures of the former, and to be proper acknowledgments that the material reigning powers of this universe were subservient unto that spiritual being who created them; then it must appear to be a system full of wisdom and goodness.— And we may be very certain, that God could institute the whole of that service, for no other design; seeing he reproaches that people, multitudes of times, for being so grossly ignorant, in spite of all his instructions of the contrary, as to imagine such a worship was of itself grateful to him, or could intitle them to his favour:—so that he strongly remonstrates unto them by his servants; and declares, that the whole of their devotion, considered in that light, was an abomination unto him.

THE two grand national corruptions of this divine system, were, first, their alienating that service from the true God, and carrying the intention of their devotion no higher than the idols of the Heathens, which at best only represented the divine attributes they imagined in this material system. In this course of idolatry, they lost sight of true learning and natural knowledge; corrupted their very notions

tions of morality, converting all manner of vice not only into virtue, but into religious worship; and, in the basest manner, prostituted or neglected the symbols and way-marks of spiritual knowledge. For this, that vicious nation was at last delivered up unto captivity, and, for the future, forfeited that miraculous course of divine interpositions, which had, till then, been connected with the Mosaic rituals, in support of the nation they were committed unto.

THIS nation, having thus forfeited their civil liberty and independency, by having abandoned the knowledge and worship of that supreme independent being, who wrought it and maintained it for them; they were again recalled to their own land, which they now held by a tributary vassalage to the empires into whose hands they came. By the Babylonish captivity, they were cured of their proneness to idolatry. But their second corruption of the divine law was still worse, and incurred the dissolution of their oeconomy and nation. They professed a strict attachment unto the letter of the law; but, instead of beholding therein the spiritual perfection it pointed out to them, they actually imagined, that their ceremonial observances were the righteousness of God itself, and preferred it unto the fearing of God and working righteousness. Here a professed morality and hypocritical sanctity reigned, to the despite of spiritual righteousness, wherever it appeared. This state, though it had the shew of more wisdom than that of idolatry, yet inferred more ignorance, and a grosser misapplication of that great design of the law: Under this disadvantage came he into the world, who was to be the righteousness of God, and who was to exhibit,

exhibit, in his life and actions, what was the spiritual meaning of every iota of the law.

THAT this material dispensation was, however, designed to be necessarily subservient to some more noble oeconomy, is evident, by the long-suffering which the divine Being exercised towards that nation, among whom he had established it. For it is evident, that, at no period of time upon record, did the Jewish nation adhere to an uniform and universal observance of it. They exercised the divine patience to the uttermost, by their constant apostasies; so that, if he had not supported that oeconomy for higher purposes than for any real benefit a nation so prone to abuse it could reap by it, he would have given up the system as untenable long before; unless any should be so malicious against God, as to suppose, that he insisted upon a rigorous observance of these carnal ordinances, for no other purpose, but to have a constant occasion of quarrelling with a froward people.

THE law then being a finished system of worldly glory, in the most pompous shew of the most expensive and extravagant-like ordinances and institutions, it is most obvious to conclude, without descending to particulars, that the most costly services which appertained to it, as they had in themselves no possible tendency to profit either the people or their God, whom they were to worship by them, most certainly aimed at higher things than what were sensibly exhibited in the course of their devotion; they stood not for themselves; but were an index to invisible things, which the understanding was thereby directed unto. These were more precious in their nature, and more durable beyond compare. The priests,
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and the sacrifices; the sanctuary, and all its furniture; the people, and all their services; the visible relation which God claimed unto them, with all the benefits they from time to time reaped by it, were all, to be sure, real in their kind, and had once a glorious place in the world. But if they could have been of efficacy, to establish and confirm an abiding harmony and mutual blessedness between God and that people, or if God designed them as such; can his purposes fail? Is he a man, that he should lie? Where are they now? All we can say about them is, that they were a shadow of spiritual glories, which had more reality in them. This shadow God was at infinite pains to preserve in the midst of a people very vitiously inclined towards them; but when the spiritual original shone out, the shadow immediately dissolved.

THEY who enjoy now the manifest discovery of that mystery, which was hid under these types and figures from so many ages and generations, and who have, at the same time, the exact knowledge of these types and figures which the Almighty has taken so much care to preserve and record, may thereby reap infinite advantage, as to a distinct knowledge both of material and spiritual things and actions.

So much does the Hebrew language agree with the figurative nature of the Old Testament dispensation, that it is impossible to explain the meaning of most of the types, without the assistance of the language; because the names for those things which are assumed as types, express their natures or these qualities in them or relating unto them, which made them proper symbols of analogous spiritual discoveries to be manifested of the divine perfections; and the same words
are

are applied to these spiritual things which denominate the material hieroglyphics of them.

For instance, if the Hebrew words which denominate a *bullock* or a *ram*, &c. in their literal signification; express some of those principal actions, or material powers by which the course of nature is supported; and if the same words are also used for the agencies of divine power exerting itself in the spiritual world, and supporting it; it is obvious, these creatures are not designed by such a name, without some reference to the principal virtues or properties expressed by the same word, first in the material, and ultimately in the spiritual world.

VII. THE Old Testament and New Testament revelations stand in some such relation unto one another, as that of a parable and its interpretation do. They have a connexion in some sort like what is established between a fable and its moral. These methods of conveying instruction were in great reputation among the ancients, who were in many other instances very exact copiers of the divine manner of writing.

THE books, commonly called the New Testament, give an account of the discovery of those divine perfections and powers, which constitute the excellency and glory of a spiritual omnipotent One. All these were discovered in the sentiments, words, actions and sufferings of a man. It also fully unfolds all those divine truths and doctrines relating to a Deity, which are comprehensible by intelligent creatures; which truths are all founded upon that exhibition which was made of them by God's manifesting them in the flesh. It also discovers the infinite
ends

ends and intentions for which this discovery was made with the effects and consequences of it. The whole laid together, composes that perfect original of spiritual glory, which the earthly glory under the law painted, and which the Prophets, who wrote in that style, foretold. By this means, we have the divine lineaments, and that material picture of them, which the Deity himself designed, so adjusted to one another, that every eye may trace the perfect likeness, and be judges of the true nature and value of each.

It was not therefore the business of Christ, and the New Testament writers, to comment upon the Old Testament dispensation, and explain it. Their task was, to fulfil and display that true glory, which, when compleatly revealed, appeared the true original of all that was prefigured of old. There are, indeed, some references made by the New Testament writers to the Old; but these are very few in comparison of that universal justness which will be found between the two oeconomies, when they are fully compared. I am sorry, that I should have it to remark of any, but especially of those who profess the greatest regard and zeal for revelation, that they teach, it is dangerous and unwarrantable, to apply any part of the Old Testament, as the proper figures and prophecies of things revealed in the New Testament, except in those few passages where we find it expressly cited in the New Testament books. Did the Lord fulfil the law and the prophets, and has he transmitted unto us the knowledge of what he fulfilled; and yet shall we be dared to compare the picture, of God's own designing, with the true original, which he has been pleased also to discover to

us? Did all the Prophets witness unto Christ; and did the Lord himself, and his Apostles, practise the explaining, in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself; and have we these same Old Testament scriptures, with a disuasive or danger annexed unto the gift, if we attempt to make the only use of them they are useful for? Did prophecy come in old time, not by the will of men, but as holy men of God spoke, moved by the Holy Ghost; and yet shall we, who have these writings, with the superadded blessing of that display which the Holy Ghost moved them to testify unto, be confined to the private interpretation of these scriptures, as it related only unto the persons and things literally mentioned, without daring to dive further into the beautiful design? But I hope it may, some time or other, even be shewn, that the citations, which are made from the Old Testament in the New, are so wisely chosen, as to serve for a general direction unto the proper application of these two revelations unto one another, which the most unskilful may be taught safely to employ for that use. Though the New Testament writers were not commentators upon the Old revelation, nor took upon them to adjust the translations from the Hebrew; yet they, in several places, give us examples of their understanding the Old Testament writings, according to the most critical and exact signification of the Hebrew words, even in proper names, which no translators ever pretended to transpose into another language, according to the literal signification of such proper names. This I look upon as the strongest proof which can be adduced of the significancy of Hebrew names of persons,

sons, things, &c. for expressing their natures, virtues, and typical uses, both with regard unto higher natural actions, and spiritual powers and operations. The authority of inspired New Testament writers, who must be thoroughly conversant in both dispensations, is certainly of the greatest weight in this case.

It is observed by a New Testament author, in a letter of his to some Christians who then were, That a personage, which appeared of old to one of the Patriarchs, was, in his character, dignity, office, and in the very interpretation of his name, a figure of the Son of God. His words are: "For this Melchizedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; to whom Abraham also gave a tenth part of all; first being, by interpretation, king of righteousness, and after that also, king of Salem, which is, king of peace, &c." I shall not here enter upon a dissertation, who this Melchizedec was. I leave every one to judge, who could be greater than him who received the promises? or who would bless him whom God had blessed? and who must it be, that received tithes from Abraham, of whom it is witnessed, both by David and this New Testament writer, "that he liveth and abideth a priest for ever?" The end for which I adduce this citation is, to shew, that, in order to establish who this person was, who, in his character, was so much allied to him who was now of the tribe of Judah, the Holy Spirit has recourse unto the true interpretation of his Hebrew name, and also the name of the place where he reigned. And if we are at all allowed the

study of the Old Testament scriptures, I am sure we shall never be able to pursue that valuable research with more success, than by following the footsteps of them who were the revealers of all that glory which was hid in the law and in the prophets.

EDOM was the standing name of that nation which was descended of Esau, as the Israelites were of Jacob. But an Apostle applies what is said of Edom (if we adhere only to the private interpretation of the prophecies, and regard not the signification of proper names) unto mankind in general. For the interpretation of Edom, is *man*; and the word is used, as a collective, for mankind, as they are all of one blood and frame, *Amos ix. 12. Acts xv. 17.*

THE king of the locusts, who is represented as arising out of the bottomless pit, had a name given him, which signified, both in Hebrew and in Greek, that destruction which he displays in his character, and is himself to go into. So we find the New Testament writers shew abundance of regard unto the interpretation of Hebrew proper names, and authorise our inquiry into their exactest signification, in order to understand the Old Testament writings.

JERUSALEM is the name of a city very famous in the sacred writings. The word, as an appellative, gives as distinct an idea of that place, as any other appellative can do of any other place known in history. But when that proper name comes to be translated, it gives us an idea of the place, which quite corresponds with the Deity's special providence about it, and with what the prophets foretel of it. The word signifies *the possession of peace*. And if we examine more accurately into the meaning of the words which com-

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pose that name, (for there are other words which have similar significations, which yet convey different ideas of the same things), we shall discover the nature of that possession, and of that peace, which the name expresses.

I know some people are industrious to diminish the authority of the Hebrew, by alledging, that the Lord, and his Apostles, cite the Old Testament scriptures, not from the original, but from the LXX. version. But if that argument proves any thing at all, it proves too much, and gives that translation by uninspired men a preference to the original language of inspiration; and sets aside the usefulness of it altogether, if that pretended example is to be followed. Every one, who knows any thing of the matter, knows that *Jehovah* and *Adoni* are Hebrew words, which, if they have any meaning at all, have different ones: yet the Greek, and our English translation following that example, gives us one word for both, namely, *Kύριος*, *Lord*. So likewise there are several names of different significations in the Hebrew, which are translated by that one in Greek, *Θεός*, *God*. Now though the names of the Deity in Hebrew are all translated by these two Greek ones, none will be able to instruct, that these two words unfold all the ideas of the divinity which are conveyed by his proper names in the Hebrew. It must therefore be concluded, that the New Testament writers never designed to destroy the authority of the original, nor to weaken our regard to it, by their manner of using the Old Testament writings. If we would understand the regard they had for the Hebrew, we ought to examine the justest meaning of the passages they adduce, by the Hebrew
itself;

itself; and, when we have discovered the full latitude of their meaning as much as possible, let us compare that with the strain of their writings where such passages are referred unto: and then, if we find that these two exactly agree, we must conclude, that they adhered most strictly to the sense of the Hebrew; and that their citations, in the words they adduce, are only designed as references unto the Hebrew passages, in order to our discovering their agreement with them the more exactly. Would it be any argument against translating the Hebrew word *sabaoth* by *hosts*, as *Jehovah of hosts*, because the New Testament writers use that word once and again, without translating it at all.

BUT it is not really true in fact, that New Testament writers adhere always closely unto the Septuagint. There are many differences even where they are imagined to follow it most closely. I shall give an example. Compare *Eph. iv. 8. 9.* and *Psal. lxxviii. 18.* The inspired writer there, adheres neither to the original, nor to the LXX. particularly. The Apostle uses the freedom to vary the person of the verb from them both, because it was more suitable to his manner of citing it.

THE Apostles have a variety of different manners of adducing the Old Testament passages, and use such a freedom in their manner, as none but inspired persons had a right to do. In some places we find texts recorded, which in so many words are to be found neither in the original, nor in the LXX.

THE design of the references unto the Old Testament, is neither to give us just translations of the passages, nor to support the authority of the LXX.; but

But to refer us to the Old Testament, that we may discover, upon examining it, how it is fulfilled: and the writers give us such references, in their own words, as is sufficient to direct to the passages referred to. Their words direct to the Old Testament writings; where the passages ought to be examined and compared, with what they intimate was a fulfilment, or with their reasoning upon them. But, in their references, they studied not to adhere to the place pointed at, on many accounts; because their own words were infallible; because the Hebrew was a language not then spoken, but which ought to be studied, both on account of the language and sense of the writings; because, if they had changed much their references from the then translation, as they were fulfilling the Old Testament, their opposers might have alledged they were glossing the scriptures into senses most suitable unto their own purposes. On several such accounts, their manner of introducing the intendment of the Old Testament is very various; sometimes they use nearly the words of the LXX.; sometimes they come nearer the original; sometimes they vary from both; sometimes they cite different passages, and compose one sentence of them, though the passages in the sentence stand far from one another in the original, as *Rom. ix. ult.* compared with *Isa. viii. 14. xxviii. 16.*; sometimes they comprehend in one sentence all that was prophesied of Christ in the Old Testament, under a certain character, and every thing that was said of him by the prophets which referred unto that character: and thus they sum up as if each prophet had said in as many words what was in effect the sense of them all; as particularly in that noted passage,

passage, which, seeing I am to mention, I shall endeavour to clear up.

Matth. ii. ult. "And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene."

THE scriptures inform us, that in six days the Creator, by regular steps, finished this material system. While it is sustained by that power and action of the divine will which gave being unto it, it stands a material plan and delineation of the manifold perfections of the Almighty, as they are displayed to our understandings, in the progress and completion of revelation.

IN this absolutely perfect and entire piece of mechanism, we find orbs properly formed and stationed, for separating and impressing the light (that penetrating material soul and primum mobile of the system) with such impulses, as were necessary for producing as innumerable a variety of effects, as it found variously organized bodies for diversifying its operations. A profuse variety of these were disseminate through nature; and the machinery was put in motion, which has ever since continued to rear, perfect, dissolve, and renew all kinds of life in abundance. Every kind of organical body, according to its configuration, disposes the light, and the matter which it carries along with it, into different kinds of motion, proper for supplying all the various ends of growth and life in different beings. The whole frame of nature thus disposed to proceed uninterrupted in its course, stood a manifest symbol of all that variety of intellectual life,

life, which the Author of all things was capable of infusing into men, and of making them divinely happy in the enjoyment of:

AFTER consummating this glorious fabric in six equal periods of time, the seventh return of it was blessed as a rest to God and man; and had the name of *sabbath*, a rest, given to it. Which rest would have been uninterrupted, but by a fatal accident, which broke the rest both of the Deity, and of man, his image in this creation. The consequences of man's apostasy was, that the divine intercourse between God and him was interrupted. God was set a working a-new to bring the materials of the spiritual world into order again; which has ever since engaged the divine application. Man was condemned to earthly labour, which otherwise he would not have been subjected unto; and God, by reason of that spirit of apostasy, which has spread itself over our whole race, was obliged to interpose again his immediate agency in the work he had finished, in order to assert and maintain, from time to time, its dependence upon him, and his absolute supremacy over it, by repeated miracles, a new kind of working in matter which he was engaged in. So that the original sabbath ceased; though divine wisdom judged it necessary to institute a new symbolical one to fallen men.

THE word NaZaR, which we have translated a *Nazarete*, and the primary from which it is derived, gives us a glance of all these things in its signification: for it signifies originally, *to divide, irradiate, separate, &c.* as the fluid light does, by disseminating itself to all places and distances; hence, comparatively, any scattering in the same manner. The word includes

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also, in its meaning, a separation or extension of matter in a select manner, as every body selects and arranges that matter which is proper for its own growth and extension; by which means its parts are unfolded, separated, and enlarged. This word is applied both to the agent which produces it, and to the bodies it is produced upon. Hence the word signifies *a crown*, that royal emblem of irradiation; and is particularly applied to the precious stones upon it, which have the particular quality of irradiating light more strongly than any other terrestrial substance, and which divide the light, and separate it into these different actions which give the idea of different colours.

As the entrance of corruption introduced along with it that disorder which necessarily set God and man to work in a manner which would not have been otherwise requisite; so the symbol of that original rest which was enjoined in the observance both of days and years, necessarily connected, along with the idea of *rest*, that also of *separation*, and had the title of *holy*, KaDaSH (which is an analogical word expressing the spiritual idea of NaZaR) bestowed upon them. The sabbath was holy, and represented that state of rest which was opposite unto the works which God and man were engaged in, by the defection of the latter. Therefore it was, that in the sabbatical year all human culture was suspended, nature was allowed to rest, and the system was left to proceed in its own original course, without the interposition of agriculture or art, which man was doomed to by the fall. The vegetables, which required most cultivation, particularly the vine, because of its nature
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and utility, had a sabbatical name, which was applicable to them for that year, namely, NaZaR : For then it was allowed to grow luxuriantly, to extend its twigs, and separate its nourishment, fruit, &c. without retrenching or altering the power of the light and season acting upon it, by pruning, and other kinds of artificial force. For that year also it was set apart from private property to public utility.

THIS is a thing particularly notable in the application of the signification of this word unto the things which it denominates. It intimated, that the virtues which were in them, or figured by them, in that state of separation, were not for selfish ends, but designed for diffusive and public benefits. Thus the crowns which embraced the sacred tables, altars, and heads of priests and princes, though they represented glorious virtues in the character they typified, and these conveyed in a separate manner and condition from the natural state of mankind, yet it represented them as all intended for public blessings; as we see of the fruits produced in the sabbatical year were. So also crowns were not to be looked upon as private ornaments for those who wore them, but as marks and emblems of the profuse bounties which the persons or people connected with those who wore them, were to expect from them, or at least were directed to expect from him of whom they were types.

As we find typical constitutions, both taken from the unorganical and vegetable parts of nature, named by this word, we have also a most noble and significant one instituted among mankind, the most glorious part of the animal system; by which means the typical application of this word runs through.

the three grand divisions of terrestial substances, as under the influence of the celestial agents.

THERE is not to be found, in the whole Levitical law, a more extraordinary and striking typical character than that of the *Nazarite*. The person under that vow which constituted him a Nazarite, had three very remarkable charges to fulfil, which made up his character; one regarded his purity; another his support; and the third referred to his power and glory, together with its use and extensive design.

I. THE Nazarite was to keep himself free from all typical pollution. Whatever in the law constituted typical defilement if it reached him, it at once dissolved his character; from that moment he ceased to be a Nazarite. Here was whatever was meant by the sabbath, comprehended in the character of a man. As one offence broke the rest God entered into with man in his perfection, so one defilement disannuls all the Nazarite's title to purity. Pure uniformity, and undisturbed progress in the course established by divine appointment, is the idea we affix to holiness and a sabbatical state before the fall; but, in consequence of corruption, *separation* must likewise be understood to complete the view. We see what the smallest stain of pollution would have done to him who was the true Nazarite; how dreadful and irreparable would the consequence have been? What watchful and unwearied caution must it require, for one to walk in the midst of defilement, and keep from touching it? But as there was a person, who was pure as a Nazarite, and holy as the sabbath of the Lord; so it pleased God to testify of him,—"This is the day God has made;—this is my rest; here I will stay."

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“ The sun (for what is the day but the sun?) of
 “ righteousness shall arise,——and his face as the
 “ sun when it shineth in its strength.” All the
 prophets since the world began, either before or since
 the coming of the true Nazarite, testify of his
 purity, and of his never being alienated, by the smal-
 lest defilement, from being as fully, in all things, under
 the divine influence, as this earth was made under
 the influence of the heavens, when the work was
 first perfected.

2. THE Nazarite was to abstain from all vinous
 liquor and fruits of the vine. As wine was one of
 the most notable Old Testament types, on account of
 its too well known powerful effects upon the animal
 spirits; and was, on the same account, resumed in a
 New Testament institution by the Lord himself;
 therefore that tree particularly was called NaZaR,
 in the sabbatical year. So, when the typical use of
 that word was transferred unto a man, he was abso-
 lutely interdicted the use of any thing pertaining
 to the vine; obviously to denote thereby, that he, or
 the divine character which he typified, was to owe
 none of his superior powers and qualifications to that
 natural cherisher and fanner of the animal spirits. As
 he was to derive the infusion of all that power and
 glory, which should appear in him, from above; so
 he was to conduct himself in such a manner, as to
 make it evident, he depended not upon his natural
 powers, or what most remarkably affected and sup-
 ported them, to sustain him in that character. This
 also is every where testified of Christ in the Old
 Testament; and the same he was always careful to
 acknowledge himself; every where professing that he
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taught not his own glory, but his who sent him; that he had had no power, if it had not been given him; that he received commandment what he should say, and what he should do; and that that commandment was what he lived by. How remarkable are these words of his:—"As the living Father hath sent me, and "I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even "he shall live by me."

3. THE Nazarite was to suffer his hair to grow all the days of his sustaining that character. Hair was an undisputed emblem of glory and power, or of irradiation. Not to enter into a detail of the suitability of such a figure in the Old Testament, I shall prove the fact by a very remarkable Old Testament history. The most famous typical Nazarite that ever we heard of, was Samson, that prodigy of strength. His strength was quite supernatural, to shew that the antitype's was to be so too. His strength was connected with the growing of his hair, because it was the symbol of strength and power in a Nazarite; for it could be no natural cause of his vigour. To make the design of the type plain, infinite Wisdom, in this instance, thought it proper, to connect the growing of his hair as a Nazarite and his strength together. Here too we see remarkably, that the Nazarite's separation from the common and ordinary assistances of nature, was in order to demonstrate, that support was to be conveyed without them. This conveyed support was always designed for a public blessing; as Samson was to his nation, in a most extraordinary manner.

THE prophets all agree in ascribing unto the Messiah, all the supreme attributes of divine power, strength,

strength, and glory; and testify, that these were displayed by him, to deliver sinners from the greatest miseries they could be involved in, and to bestow upon them the greatest blessings heaven had to bestow. So that he is every where declared to be the true and only copy of all that the word NaZaR signifies, and of all that the things and persons named by that word were pictures of. Hence we see, that so much regard is shewn unto the signification of Hebrew words, and the characters they are used by revelation to express, that, when a person is described by all the perfections unfolded in the signification of a word, or exhibited by the things to which the word is applied, it is accounted the same as if the person were called by that name. The name indeed itself is applied unto the Messiah: but the sacred historian intimates, that it was the general voice of the prophets to call him a Nazarene; because they ascribed every divine quality unto him that was conveyed by the application of that word in revelation.

It remains only, that I notice why the historian says, that he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that these prophecies of him might be fulfilled. The Deity, careful to obviate and rouse the inattention of mankind, ordinarily connected some analogous external circumstance, with the spiritual completion of the types and prophecies, in the person of the Messiah. For this reason, all the miracles he wrought, were only indexes unto the spiritual circumstances of mankind, and how divine power was to be exerted for extricating and delivering them. The external glory which some of the disciples were favoured

favoured with a view of, was only a shadow of that which they behold to whom he gives power to become the sons of God. His bodily thirst upon the cross, coincided with the thirsting of his soul for the living God, "as the hart panteth after the water-brooks;" as that part of his sufferings is predicted in one of the Psalms, when he cried out, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" When he was spiritually under the power of darkness, then was it darkness over all the land. When, through the vail of his flesh, access was opened into the holiest of all, then was "the vail of the temple rent in twain." So here, when he was to enter upon fulfilling his vow, as the true Nazarite, the divine precaution provided a circumstance relating to him, which gave occasion to his being called by that name; that the people's attention might be the more effectually fixed upon him, while fulfilling that character.

It would exceed the design of this short essay, to say every thing relating to the nature and excellency of the Hebrew scriptures that might be said. From the structure of the language, the capacity of the author, and the extensiveness of the subject, we may expect the most unerring information in all valuable knowledge; unless any will be so base and ungrateful as to affirm, that the author of truth has chosen to write to mankind, in a language which, of all others, was most adapted to impose upon our understandings by its structure, necessarily deluding us into conceptions which the author never designed to convey. But can we suppose, that that infinite bounty which put man in possession of the creation, and constituted him lord of the world at first, and which once more invites him

him to be an heir of all things, would not exert infinite wisdom to acquaint him with the knowledge of every thing he called him unto the most perfect enjoyment of? It implies a contradiction to say otherwise.

BUT let the philosophers and disputers of this world, who pretend to be wiser than God, or at least than his writings; let them, I say, bring forth their cause, and shew wherein it is that the scriptures are adapted only to the conceptions of the vulgar, contrary to the better informed understanding of the learned. Only I must beg, they would do the Deity that piece of justice which is due to Homer or Virgil; for the man would be laughed at as a fool, who would pretend to criticise or find fault with them, while he understood not a sentence of the language in which either was writ.

As to those who pay no regard to revelation, they must in reason allow a Christian to search as accurately the beauties of it, as they themselves do the writings of the antient Pagans; which deserve of a Christian infinitely less notice, and, when put on a level with the scriptures, infinite contempt; while one is believed to be the production of the most the high God, let the others be what they will besides. When we have gathered the wind in our fists, and have bound up the waters of the sea in a garment; then we may imagine that we can easily comprehend the glory of God, and of his works, as both are delivered in the scriptures.

I am aware, that great danger may be apprehended from giving a loose to our imagination; and that men of strong fancies, and small acquaintance with the

Scheme of revelation, and the true genius of the language, may launch into idle speculations and absurdities unworthy of revelation. But suppose some such instances there should appear; what then? Must the revival of the language be neglected for fear of such consequences? Yea rather, let every one study it, that all may be able to detect the mistakes of such as err. They who would insinuate such a danger, are like those who cry aloud, Be not religious or righteous over much, because some, under that pretext, have proved to be enthusiasts or hypocrites.

I am sensible, that, at present, a great many difficulties attend the study of the Hebrew. I have felt them, and know that they may be overcome. All the Grammars that are extant are almost useless, and the Dictionaries are erroneous and defective, both in classing the words, and in assigning them their significations. But then Concordances are extant; and, by the indefatigable industry of a very ingenious and learned Gentleman, the world will soon be favoured with the most perfect one that ever was published.

THE difficulties, which can be easily supplied by one who is skilled in the Hebrew, are not to be compared with the accessibleness of this language, and the advantages which attend the study of it beyond any other. The rules of Grammar are the most compendious that can be; the primary words are few, not above a thousand; the ideas they convey are natural; the connexions between these and the derivatives are obvious and simple; the style of the writings is natural and plain; the periods short and unperplexed; the similitudes used are all either taken
from

from nature, or from transactions recorded in the writings themselves; and the subject of the whole is interesting in the highest degree, and of the last consequence.

I rejoice that this age has the prospect of seeing this language revive and flourish. Men both of learning and rank are honourably engaged in the study and advancement of it; and many noble discoveries have already been made by the knowledge of it.

I must conclude, with a reflexion upon the different lights in which God and man consider that noble one, who has appeared in the world, for repairing the divine glory, and averting the miseries which the contempt of his bounty and kindness entail upon mankind. At best, we find nothing very striking or remarkable in his character and behaviour, save that he did some wonderful things, which, if they are credited at all, make a very slight impression upon our minds. His character appears no way eminent, save for some passive virtues, which will never be in high esteem among men of honour, and people who cannot endure that their qualifications should not make a figure in the world. We are not sensible of any great favour he has done mankind, or of any remarkable instance of affection he has shown for them. We have no great inclination to imitate his character, and would be impatient of being the same obscure creatures in the world that he was. If any of us were in possession of the same power that he seems to have inherited, and preserved, at the same time, our present inclinations, let us consult our own breasts,
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and see what attitude we would have chosen to appear in, and what pleasures we would have followed? Would not we have made ourselves men of renown, and rendered ourselves the wonder of the world? Would we have suffered contempt to have been thrown upon our virtues and good offices to others, without chastising it? From whence can all this difference between him and us proceed? Nay, does not our indifference about him very often increase to a contempt of his person, a detraction of his character, and a slighting of his kindness. Our race have even shewn themselves not incapable of reviling his person, scoffing at his virtues and piety, and blaspheming the power he shewed himself invested with; though, in the whole of his history, we have not recorded an action that he did, or a word that he spoke, which seemed not intended to engage the love and esteem of every person.

On the other hand, we find him a person whom the Creator of all things thought so worthy of his notice, as to direct his whole regard to him from the beginning of time. He seems to have contrived the whole plan of creation, magnificent as it is, on purpose to give us suitable ideas of the dignity of his person, the extent of his power, and the profusion of his kindness and love. We find the Deity, for too just provocations, from time to time, giving way to the most universal and desolating calamities, on purpose, as it were, to alarm mankind of dangers of a still more terrible nature overtaking them. We find him, in his clemency, rebuking men with a fatherly affection, and interposing his own miraculous power, suspending his anger, and raising up saviours to
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check and repel these miseries, in order to point out the compassion and kindness of that person towards the wretched condition of mankind. We find God selecting a family and people, and supporting them by a train of miracles, for the sake of this one person; for, upon his leaving the world, the nation and commonwealth was dissolved. We find the Creator new-modelling all the glory of the creation into a typical system, for exhibiting the glory he foresaw in the person of that man. In short, we may see him forming and preserving a language which should do justice to his works, that, pointing out the Messiah by all the excellency of them, he might do justice to his character. We see God so full of the perfection of that person, and of the glory that he was to receive by him, that, whenever he opens his mouth by his holy prophets, he speaks of him, or refers unto him, in one way or another. Justly might he say, that his Father bare witness of him; for he has made the whole of his works center in him. This is the man whom God delighted to honour; but who was rejected and despised of men.

THE whole of this creation seems to be so much designed for the glory and service of this person, and the language which is taken from it seems so calculated for discovering his perfections, and for the exercise of the spiritual power with which he is invested, that a New Testament prophet describes one appearance he had of him, quite relative to all things terminating in him. He appeared at the head of the spiritual world, with a book (the emblem of language) before him, and the whole creation doing homage around him.

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THE above pages being only designed to give a general idea of the nature and excellency of the Hebrew language and writings, I have even, in any illustrations adduced, industriously kept myself from entering into any accurate disquisitions for explaining the Hebrew, or any of the words I have mentioned; as that would have rendered the essay useful only for judges or students of the language. If the public shall be in any measure benefited by what I have writ, I do not lose my reward.

The whole of this work seems to be designed for the purpose of illustrating the language which is the subject of the inquiry, and for the purpose of discovering the original power with which it is invested, that a New Testament prophet describes one appearance he had of him, quite relative to all things terminating in him. He appeared as the head of the spiritual world, with a book (the emblem of language) before him, and the whole creation doing homage around him.



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